

NEARLY THIRTY YEARS A MEMBER OF CONGRESS

Such the Record of
"Uncle Joe" Cannon
of Illinois.

IS THE FATHER OF THE HOUSE

BUT ONCE DEFEATED IN ALL HIS
LONG SERVICE FOR THE
PEOPLE.

He Has Been Chairman of the Appropria-
tions Committee for Eight
Years—His Bluff of Europe Just
Preceding the Spanish War.

(Special Correspondence.)

WASHINGTON, Nov. 24.—"Joseph G. Cannon, Republican, of Danville, Ill., was born at Guilford, N. C., May 7, 1836; is a lawyer; was state attorney in Illinois from March, 1861, to December, 1868; was elected to the Forty-third, Forty-fourth, Forty-fifth, Forty-sixth, Forty-seventh, Forty-eighth, Forty-ninth, Fiftieth, Fifty-first, Fifty-second, Fifty-third, Fifty-fourth and Fifty-fifth congresses and was re-elected to the Fifty-sixth congress, receiving 21,484 votes to 14,116 for John M. Thompson, democrat, and 682 for Samuel S. Jones, prohibitionist."

This is the sketch of the "father of the house," as it is printed in the Congressional directory for the Fifty-sixth congress. It has been changed little in the last twenty-five years. The only change has been the addition of another congress every two years. In the next congressional directory it will be changed by the addition of the Fifty-seventh congress to the list. Only one congressional directory since 1872 has not had his autobiography. That was the directory of the Fifty-second congress.

Elected Fourteen Times.

Mr. Cannon has been elected to congress fourteen times. That is several times more than any other member of the present congress. He is therefore "the father of the house." He has been "Uncle Joe" to everybody in Washington for a score of years, and while regarded as the fiercest fighter in the house, he has done more kindly acts for other members and outsiders than any other man in congress. "Uncle Joe" fits him better than "father of the house," and he will continue to be known as "Uncle Joe" whether he remains at the head of the committee on appropriations in the house or succeeds to the seat of Shelby M. Culom in the senate.

A great many men in Washington are giving attention to the Senatorial contest in Illinois, because they have heard that "Uncle Joe" is a candidate for Culom's seat. They are wondering if he is an avowed candidate, for he has a long record of winning where he starts into a contest.

Mr. Cannon was once defeated for Congress. He went down with the republican crash in 1890, after the passage of the McKinley bill. He had good company. McKimley was defeated the same year. So were scores of republican leaders in the West. Mr. Cannon was also defeated for Speaker in the Fifty-first Congress. So was McKimley. Thomas B. Reed was elected. McKimley became chairman of the committee on ways and means and Cannon became chairman of the committee on appropriations. In every republican Congress since then Cannon has been chairman of his old committee, and as such he had more power and responsibility regarding appropriations for government expenses and public works than any other member of either house.

Attitude on the War.

Mr. Cannon was not a jingo before the war with Spain. He was one of the conservatives. He knew that war meant big appropriation and increased debt, rather than economy, and the continuance of paying off bonded indebtedness. But when the battleship Maine was blown up in Havana harbor, "Uncle Joe" said little on either side. He began making a few flurries, and one morning he quietly dropped a little bill in the box, which, when found, created a sensation, not only in Washington, but in every city in the civilized world.

That bill was unique. It had no precedent. It appropriated \$50,000,000 for public defense, and placed the sum at the disposal of the President. It meant that the nation would get ready for war and it directed the President to take steps to that end. It was passed without a dissenting vote by the House. There were speeches, but they were all for the bill. In the Senate there were no speeches, but it passed by unanimous vote there also.

It Indicated Fight.

Cannon's bill was the first sign that the United States intended to fight. It was not bluster. It was more important than that. Uncle Sam pulled out his coat. The bill was illustrative of "Uncle Joe's" character. He wanted to keep out of war, and gave his influence against war so long as it seemed possible to avoid it. But when war became inevitable, "Uncle Joe" thought as he would think in a game of poker. There was need for a good bluff, and a bluff that could be backed up if called.

There were other nations in Europe that were encouraging Spain. It seemed possible that some of them might feel encouraged to take a hand in the scrap. "Uncle Joe" gave Europe a sample of American readiness for war by having Congress hand over \$50,000,000 to the President. It started the world, as Mr. Cannon meant that it should. It was a bluff, not meant for Spain, but for the other European powers. It answered its purpose.

Powers Grew Cautious.

The powers that were friendly to Spain became cautious regarding unfriendly acts toward the United States. They did not care to offend a power that could take \$50,000,000 out of the treasury in this emergency, while the first step of European governments would be a loan or an issue of bonds.

Uncle Joe does many things in this way—a way that is more familiar to poker players than to other men. He tests the opposition with a bluff.

Mr. Cannon was born in a Quaker settlement of North Carolina. When he was 4 years old his father, Dr. Horace F. Cannon, emigrated to the banks of the Wabash at Bloomington, Parke county, Ind. Dr. Cannon lived

in that town until his death, in 1851, and there his son Joe received his early education and training. He was 14 years old when his father died, and at that age he started out for himself, his first work being as a clerk in a country store. He was so employed until he had attained his majority, when he began the study of law, and was admitted to the bar at Terre Haute in 1858.

The next year Mr. Cannon moved to Tuscola, Ill., and in 1861 he was elected district attorney. He held that office for seven years, or until 1868, and in 1872 he was elected to Congress from that district. It was at that time that Joe Cannon began to figure in national affairs. The district has been changed twice since his first election, but Mr. Cannon still represents a large part of the territory which was in his first district.

Mr. Reed's Tribute.

"Uncle Joe" has been called the "Watch Dog of the Treasury," but he is much more than that. He is the adjuster of the treasury and sees that the revenues of the government are so appropriated as to do the greatest amount of good to the greatest number of the people. Speaker Reed said: "Joe Cannon is the one indispensable member of the House. Every other man could have his place filled at once should he be taken away, but I don't know how or when we could fill Mr. Cannon's place on the committee on appropriations."

Some men will have to grow up into the place when it is to be filled by another, and he will have to acquire knowledge and experience, as has "Uncle Joe," by long study and hard work.

Any man could be a "watch dog of the treasury," and sit down to oppose spending the money. But the man who wisely appropriates that money in good times and bad, when there is a surplus and when there is a deficit; keeps the government wheels going and provides for public works, without getting outside the revenues, must be a business man capable of directing the greatest business enterprise in the world—for the United States government is the biggest business enterprise in the world, and the chairman of the committee on appropriations comes as near running it as any man in the government, not excepting the President himself.

Services in Other Directions.

Conspicuous as has been "Uncle Joe" in appropriations, he has not ignored other questions. For nearly thirty years there has not been a great issue—reform of government, currency, tariff, increase of the navy, internal improvements, shipping bill, reorganization of the army, the Nicaragua canal, the Spanish war—before the American Congress that "Uncle Joe" has not taken part in the consideration. He took an active part in the formation of and the debate on the McKinley bill, and also the Dingley bill. He was one of the dominant forces in passing the currency bill and all the Spanish war legislation. He is now a member of the committee on insular affairs and second in rank only to the chairman. He was placed there because this new committee is to deal with the questions touching Porto Rico and the Philippines. He is regarded as one of the safest men in public life, and he is one of the balance wheels on this new committee.

Aggressive in Debate.

Uncle Joe in debate is earnest and aggressive. He has the reputation of being a fighter on the floor, because he had to fight a great many bills that were for appropriations, which he regarded as unwise. But there is not a duller heart in Congress than the one which beats in the breast of "Uncle Joe" Cannon, and there is no man in Congress more appealed to for help than he is. He is consulted by the President and Cabinet members, and by the Senate leaders, and his influence is sought by men who sides to every great controversy in Congress, like that over the Porto Rico tariff. But he remains the most democratic member of the House.

In debate Mr. Cannon has the mannerisms of the frontier lawyer of forty years ago. He uses the plainest, simplest, and most direct language to express his ideas. He is most, and he has a fund of homely similes and epigrams that point his speeches to make them unique examples of force, if not gems of thought and expression.

"Uncle Joe's" gestures, like his speech, are more forceful than graceful, and when in debate he begins to push on his sleeves, like an old hard-shelled fighter, circuit rider of the West in the frontier times, every spectator knows that he is ready to fight, and will as near it in parliamentary practice and debate as is possible. Yet no man in Congress has a finer sense of humor or can touch sentiment with tenderer hands than he. He looks what he is in public life—the grizzled and sturdy oak which has resisted the storms of public life for the last forty years.

The Century's Legacy.

Professor Dilliver of Tufts College, Pennsylvania, is the author of the following compendium of the nineteenth century, received as bequests and what it is going to turn over to the twentieth century as a legacy:

1. This century received from its predecessor the horse; we bequeath the bicycle, the locomotive and the automobile.
2. We received the goose-quill and bequeath the typewriter.
3. We received the scythe; we bequeath the mowing machine.
4. We received the sickle; we bequeath the harvester.
5. We received the hand printing press; we bequeath the Hoe cylinder press.
6. We received the Johnson's Dictionary; we bequeath the Century Dictionary.
7. We received the painted canvas; we bequeath photography, lithography and color photography.
8. We received the hand loom; we bequeath the cotton and woolen factories.
9. We received gunpowder; we bequeath nitro-glycerine.
10. We received the tallow dip; we bequeath the arc light and the Standard Oil Company.
11. We received the flint-lock; we bequeath the automatic Maxims.
12. We received the galvanic battery; we bequeath the dynamo.
13. We received the sailing ship; we bequeath the steamship.
14. We received the battleship Constitution; we bequeath the Oregon.
15. We received the beacon signal fires; we bequeath the telephone and wireless telegraphy.
16. We received wood and stone for structures; we bequeath twenty-story sky-supports of steel.

NEWS OF CHURCHES

AT LAST changes have been made in topics announced for the week of prayer. It is an innovation made after several years of protest. The Evangelical Alliance for the United States, it is understood, took the responsibility of the changes, both in its influence with the English Alliance and in its own appeal to American churches. The alliance here recommends special prayer on the last Sunday in December, the holding of watch-night services, and then the following for the week of prayer, January 6 to 13: On the two Sundays involved, appropriate sermons and services—a marked change from the recommendation of former years; Monday, better realization of spiritual truth and better estimate of spiritual realities; Tuesday, for the church; Wednesday, Christian character and life and personal religion; Thursday, relations in society and the nation; Friday, international relationship and action; and Saturday, missions. The appeal is sent out over the signatures of ex-President Harrison, Associate Justice Brewer, President Clark of the Christian Endeavor, the Methodist bishops Andrews and Galloway, Generals Morgan and Howard, this year's Presbyterian moderator, Dickey, Robert E. Speer, ex-Governor Northen and Booker T. Washington.

Great preparations are being made in most parts of the country for the holding of watch-night meetings. Some services of this character were held a year ago under the impression that that date began the new century. These services are now to be enlarged upon. Calls are making upon leaders for suggestions about the character of such services, and upon the personal services of famous divines in their conduct. So far as can be learned this far in advance these services are to begin in many churches on Sunday, December 30th, when the end of the century is to be considered—what has been accomplished since 1800. Then the following day and night, the last of the century, are to be devoted to prayer for the century about to open. The Evangelical Alliance suggests, which for the first time are practical and up-to-date, are to be followed quite generally, it is said. In many cities neighborhood unions are forming, in order that the brotherhood of man may be emphasized and Christian unity be practiced.

A phase of the religious world this autumn is the remarkable lack of what may be called, without international discourtesy, new schemes. As a general thing there crop up each fall a score or more men and women believing themselves to have in charge some short cut to righteousness. The columns of the Saturday dailies are blazoned with big type advertisements of persons recognized as formerly belonging to some recognized religious body who have left their old religious and who are preaching and teaching something quite new, often something quite queer. This fall search of daily newspaper columns in all principal cities fails to show more than a fraction, and a small one at that, of the number usually seen. Even Boston, which is the headquarters of the nostrums, religious, medical and otherwise, escapes. Whether improved business times are responsible for the change nobody seems to know. But there is a change. The man or woman who wants to get to heaven this year must follow the old road.

The English papers, some of them secular, are filled with details of the forthcoming National Simultaneous Mission, which is to open in London on January 26th, and to continue there for ten days, and to roams and for another ten days, all of the principal cities of England are to have missions. Lastly, for ten days in March, every settlement, however small, in all England is to have some sort of a meeting. Communities have been carefully divided up and thousands of men have been enlisted in the details. The movement is confined strictly to the free churches. Advances were made to learn if historic edifices like Westminster Abbey and St. Paul's Cathedral could be had, but the establishment promptly made it understood that such advances were useless. The most that was accomplished was the securing of Guild hall, a municipal and not a religious building. Appeals have been made from time to time for the inauguration of such simultaneous work in the United States, letters have been hundreds having been received by American ministers from ministers in England, many of them from unknown writers. To date, however, nothing has crystallized here.

A recent conference held at the Bible House in New York determined—it now appears—to abolish all depositaries which have not been successful in disposing of the American Bible Society's publications. There are in the United States 1,697 local Bible societies which collect funds for and distribute the literature of the main body. In many places these branch organizations maintain offices or stores known as depositories, whence Bibles are sold or given out. It appears that though some of these places are doing well enough, others are accomplishing nothing at all, and to do away with this latter class was one of the objects of the conference above referred to.

The yearly report of the Sunday school committee of the Presbyterian board of Michigan, which has just been made, shows that there are 35,834 children in the Sunday schools of the Presbyterian church of that state, but goes on to say in terms which there is no mistaking that during the last several years there has been very little progress in this line of religious work. By way of explanation, the report suggests that teachers are too often incompetent, that the lessons are too simple to interest mature minds, and that the attitude of the church—by creating the impression that the Sunday school is a place for only boys and girls—is all wrong.

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